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ABSTRACT

This transcript reproduces a Department of Education\College Board-sponsored discussion on ways to expand advanced-placement (AP) opportunities in high schools. The document contains the comments of panelists and presenters who described promising practices and strategies for preparing students for success, preparing teachers to lead instruction, and preparing schools to initiate and sustain rigorous learning programs. The text reproduces a video on the role that AP courses can play in students' lives and features presentations by Lee Jones, Executive Director for the Advanced Placement Program at the College Board; Lorraine Munroe, Executive Director of the School Leadership Academy at the Center for Educational Innovation in New York; and two graduates of AP programs. The document focuses on the importance of preparing children early for AP programs, as early as pre-K, and how educators get what they assume from children. It looks at the successes that come when expectations are set high and when well-trained teachers are put in place to teach children. The document also relates the personal stories of students who took advantage of AP courses and were able to parlay these courses into advanced college credit and successful careers. The transcript includes an index. (RJM)

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ED 448 521

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

* * *

A FORUM TO EXPAND ADVANCED

PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES:

INCREASING ACCESS AND IMPROVING

PREPARATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS

WASHINGTON, D.C.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2000

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PREPARATION IN HIGH SCHOOLS

Washington Court Hotel

525 New Jersey Avenue, N.W.

Grand Ballroom

Washington, D. C.

Thursday, February 10, 2000

3:38 p.m.

PRESENT:

IRENE K. SPERO

LEE JONES

JUDITH JOHNSON

LORRAINE MUNROE

JEFF LIVINGSTON

JORDANNA GRANT

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P R O C E E D I N G S

(3:38 p.m.)

IRENE SPERO: Good afternoon. My, you are a good group. Good afternoon and welcome. My name is Irene Spero, and I am Executive Director of Federal and State Relations in the Washington office of the College Board.

It is a distinct pleasure and a real honor to welcome you to this first National Forum to Expand Advanced Placement Opportunities.

On behalf of the College Board and the Department of Education, thank you for being here and thank you for participating in this forum.

You presence here today is strong evidence of your commitment to a shared vision--a shared vision of educational excellence for all students.

You come from 46 states and four territories, from as far away as Hawaii and America Samoa, and as close by as the District of Columbia, suburban Maryland and Virginia.

Some of you spend your days dealing with the challenges of large urban schools. Others are

part of the unique learning environment of small rural schools.

Yet, you all share common goals and a dedication to ensuring that all students have equal access to challenging standards, rigorous learning, and the high-quality education necessary for success in the competitive global environment.

For the last decade, most of the states have recognized and supported advanced placement as a mechanism for improving achievement and bringing high-quality learning to high-school students.

For the last three years, the Clinton Administration has funded the Advanced Placement Fee Assistance Program, helping to pay the test fees of low-income students and expanding access to these challenging courses.

This year, the program is funded at $15 million, and President Clinton has proposed a significant increase for the next year, which brings us to the reason for this summit.

As co-conveners of the summit, the Department of Education and the College Board

developed an agenda focusing on what it takes to improve access to advanced placement opportunities.

Over the next two and a half days, you will hear from outstanding panelists and presenters and learn about promising practices and strategies for preparing students for success, preparing teachers to lead instruction, and preparing schools to initiate and sustain rigorous learning programs.

At the end of our time together, it is our hope that you will be able to return to your states and write effective proposals incorporating these strategies for the expansion of advanced placement opportunities.

I want to thank our colleagues at the Department of Education for collaborating with the College Board on this conference.

I also want to acknowledge the help and assistance of several other groups -- the Council of Chief State School Offices, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the State Higher Education Executive Officers, the Weston Interstate Commission on Higher Education, the Southern Regional

Education Board, and the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Now it is my please to turn the program over to Lee Jones, Executive Director for the Advanced Placement Program at the College Board. Thank you.

(Applause.)

LEE JONES: Thanks, Irene, and welcome to everybody. I want to reiterate Irene's enthusiastic welcome to all of you.

It is great to have you here and great to see a roomful of people that are interested in expanding access to AP for a lot of students, that traditionally may not have had access to challenging course-work in high school.

It was a couple of days before Thanksgiving that President Clinton signed the budget legislation that authorized $15 million for use in the 2000 - 2001 school year to assist with examination fee payments as well as programs to expand access to AP courses for low-income students and for schools that had high proportions of low-

income students.

College Board staff and Department of Ed staff were sitting around a table saying that's a lot more money than we really have been allocating for this in the past. We want to make sure that the states know of its availability, know how they can obtain it, and can really use it in the most effective ways possible.

Really, in two months, we have organized and pulled this conference together.

We thank all of you for rearranging your schedules and making time to be here and take advantage of this opportunity.

We do have a schedule that I hope will send you home with a lot of new ideas in your heads about how to expand access to AP for low-income students in your states.

The panels have folks who have been working in schools, districts, states, where they have had success in these areas.

Indeed, there's a lot of you in the audience as well on the state teams that have had

success stories of your own to share even though you are not on the panel.

So, we have a lot of time built in--breakfast time, lunch time, reception time, this evening and tomorrow evening together--that we hope will instigate a lot of interaction between many of you so that you can go home with your head sort of bursting with ideas.

That would be our measure of the success of this forum.

Now, why is there so much focus on AP and other challenging advanced high-school courses?

One really quick and incisive answer comes from a study that was done by the Department of Education last year, that was released by the Department of Education last year that provided strong evidence that participation in advanced course-work in a student's high-school career was the single most important indicator of their success in college.

I think that speaks volumes about why it is that we are focusing on implementing challenging

academic courses in high school as a way to have a profound effect on student education in the United States.

We think that we have got a formula that works, and it appears that a lot of folks think so.

We have a curriculum with high standards that reflect college-level content and skills, a cadre of dedicated, well-prepared teachers, and student achievement that is validated by performance on a rigorous national examination.

Students can enter college with credit or placement based on their performance on that exam.

Now, getting college credit has been one of the real appeals of the Advanced Placement Program.

But, what we have learned over the years is it is only one of the many benefits that students, teachers, and schools can get from AP.

To sort of set the stage for us thinking about AP and its beneficial effects in a very broad context, we are going to show a video clip.

I want you to hear from some students and

parents, and teachers, about AP and the benefits that it has brought to them, in their own words. So, I think we are ready to go.

(Video Clip shown.)

MACK: Most students look at it as a way of getting some college credit.

If they score a three or higher, many schools either waive a requirement or give them credit at the school.

JENNY HOFFMAN: It's exciting to be able to get college credit. I sit in the class, and I am feeling that, you know, I am taking a college class and I am only in high school, and it makes me feel good about myself.

MACK: I studied physics and mathematics when I was at North Carolina. Because I have done APs, I didn't have to take a lot of their required classes that most freshmen and sophomores take. So, I jumped right into my majors.

JENNY HOFFMAN: There's also reasons you would want to take APs for advanced placement--I mean, advanced standing in college.

Maybe you can go through in three years. It is a big money-saver, at least.

(Pause.)

ANDREW ROBBINS: They're allowing me to get out of a few of the requirements, which are nice, because it allows me to take more electives since I really don't know what I am going to do with my life.

That's nice, because I can see what I want to do. I can take a lot of classes.

SHIRLEY PORTNOY: Well, it particularly matters to me when your child is trying to get into a college.

This is something that they look for to make sure that you are taking--the child is taking the most challenging courses that they can.

BILL BATT: We do put extra weight on the advanced placement courses--look for those--because we know exactly what the advanced placement course involves.

It is a standard syllabus. It is a standard exam. Those grades in the advanced are very meaningful.

LEE STETSON: The most important part of any student's record is the quality of their academic preparation.

So, it is not just taking certain courses, but it is the strength of those courses.

The way they often show us that strength is through the AP program.

(Pause.)

VOICE: I think it is for a motivated student who wants to push himself or herself to work harder than they have done before, to be challenged in ways that he or she has never worked before.

MR. SRIHARI: AP program for me was a chance to explore a lot of interests on a more advanced level.

There was an opportunity to take all of these college courses while I was in high school and explore topics that, normally, a high-school student would never have access to.

(Pause.)

JENNIFER HEMSELL: Basic courses, like in general, like an AP course was the challenge. You

had to understand the in's and the out's of it.

What I started out is they wanted to find the velocity at point B, basically at the bottom of the first slope.

So, well, I just thought it doesn't have any energy, so I went--using the Connecticut--

VOICE: I like taking advanced courses, because you do more stuff in advanced courses than you would in just a regular course.

Like, chemistry AP. You go-- You learn more in just regular chemistry, and I like the challenge.

I like the challenge, basically.

(Pause.)

SETH COHEN: Well, one thing I need to know is that the challenge will be doing more homework.

You will be in the room more often, you know. You will be stressed out a couple of times.

These students are working hard, and they are trying to give the best to the courses.

Parents become involved in the course

themselves. Like, my mom says she could have taken the AP Biology test with me, and she would have passed it.

Parents become involved in the course. They talk to the teachers every so often, or they hear the student talk so well of the teacher.

It is like they have no choice but to go into the course themselves.

(Pause.)

VOICE: The skills they learn in AP will be with them the rest of their lives, whether they have to--are taking a career in science, whether they want to go on in anything.

It teaches them how to access information, how to think, how to organize, and everything you need in your everyday life.

ALTORO: Well, for me, it basically proved to me that I could do it. I mean, when you go to a major Ivy League school, I think a lot of kids feel like, oh, I am the only one who doesn't deserve to be here.

They are going to find out in a few months

anyway, I won't be here again. But, with AP, it is a kind of--

It kind of-- It gives you a little bit more confidence.

POSE: Absolutely. I think one of the best qualities that a student can have going into the college education is academic self-confidence.

So, when you have the kind of positive experiences that you have with AP's day-to-day interaction with peers and teachers in an academic environment, that really does a lot to prepare you and make you confident.

VOICES: (Simultaneous conversation.)

MR. AHMAD: There is a strong emphasis upon writing, so students who want to really develop and hone their writing skills can get that out of the AP course.

VOICE: And you really are prepared to write in college. Before you even get there, you don't have to--

There's less worry when it comes to writing the big mid-term paper. You basically-- It

is a confidence thing, again.

(Pause.)

MR. AHMAD: People say that you have to work in college as you have never worked before. Now, it may just be that we have the intention of having taken all these AP classes, but it is not that terrible.

It is not that unsettling once you get past the first week or so.

KEVIN SHAPIRO: I think college is more about, like, do my own laundry, you know, getting used to the food.

The thing with AP, the academics are there, and it is just a continuation. It is just continuing while taking care of all this other stuff that other people used to do for you.

TATIANA GOMEZ: You are ready for college. You have been doing it. Now, it is just not college work and high school. It is just college.

(Pause.)

DAVE ZALCMANN: Well, basically it puts a focus on the course itself, because, when you take an

AP course, it is designed so that you can pass the AP exam.

VOICE: It gets you somewhat prepared for what you are going to be doing in college. The AP tests themselves give you an idea of what it is like to take a three-hour mid-term.

VOICE: I definitely think the exam should be part of the package. I just like the whole idea of getting college credit and being able to--

I liked taking the exam, because I like stressing myself out over tests. It's kind of fun to take the exam.

It is kind of fun to go crazy over what you don't know and what you didn't know, and it is like a sense of accomplishment to you.

It is like a sense of completeness, and it is going to tell you you have been up to par with the other students, or you have done your work thus far--your hard work, your sweat.

Those burning the midnight oils -- was it worth it. You finally realize at the end of that AP exam that you knew more than what you expected.

Hey, I knew that question. Or, I knew this answer.

(Pause.)

PHILLIP LEE: If you are going to take an AP course, you might as well take the AP test, because it shows that you are following through.

You are actually interested in the thing. Like, colleges, they want people who just follow through with their courses, follow through with everything.

LEE STETSON: So, what we look for are students who have stressed themselves academically, and it is important for students to take everything available to them.

It is important, therefore, for schools to offer programs that are more focused and more challenging in the Advanced Placement program is one of the best places to do that.

(Pause.)

MICHAEL BRUKMAN: The teaching, I think, is very good. I think they make you want to learn.

VOICE: Some of them, like Mr. Charitchee

and Dr. Brown who teaches history here, they have college courses.

So, they have had a lot of experience, and they usually are very excited about that. They get really--

They are like, oh, wait until this next thing. And it kind of like spreads, some of these.

My biology teacher-- It is like she got me to do some research over the summer in Maine, and it is like she has made me realize that I may not want--

I may want to be a doctor, but it is not a physician. I want it to be research. I want to have hands-on work and influence how others are going to live.

VOICE: So these people really love their subjects. I mean, I remember the bell ringing, and no one was really moving.

This is really unique, because, you know, the bell rings, you are out of there. You're to your next class.

Yes, I mean, at least with me, AP

teachers, in general, were really inspirational.

(Pause.)

PATRICIA BORDELL: Well, for one thing, I really enjoy what I am doing, and I love to solve problems.

So, I think part of that rubs off, and I like to see a student who, at the beginning, is a little--who might be a little insecure, and, by the end of the year, this person is just on target, full of confidence. They are ready to go into college, and they can do anything.

MR. ROTHSCHILD: First of all, I have met the most spectacular kids in the western world, okay.

Second of all, you can't get-- I am 60. You can't get bored, because the kids come up with new stuff all the time.

If you are going to be a good teacher, you have to keep reading all the time, and, so, as long as my energy holds out, I can't get tired of it.

MS. LOPEZ: So, the dedication, the effort, the willingness to try something hard, they know is not going to be easy.

They know that it is a demanding course, and yet they are willing to be in that class.

It makes me feel that I want to be there teaching it to them. I know how hard it is to learn a foreign language.

I have to communicate in a foreign language most of the time, and it is not an easy process.

I feel for them, and I respect them for being there and being willing to try to work very hard.

(Pause.)

VOICES: (Simultaneous conversation.)

VOICE: How do you feel about the role of affirmative action in college admissions?

VOICE: In Harvard, they are always talking about something like chess, and they figure it would be great to play.

But, in this case, the Harvard students pick up the phone and call the president of the Harvard Chess Club.

Within less than half an hour, someone had

delivered a nice professional chess set.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

(Pause.)

VOICE: For the school, it is sort of a plum. Experts in the community can come in, or people can say, hey, this school offers so many AP courses.

They have had AP scholars, or 85 of their kids took 150 AP exams and they did very well. It is certainly a good plus for the school.

TARA KAHN: They tell you that it is a good school, that they are preparing students for college.

BARBARA GORDON: I really think it does raise the level of standards for the whole school. It gives students another goal.

I have seen that students feel proud to say they are taking an AP course, and they have reached a certain level of proficiency.

VOICE: I think it helps school morale that I go to a high school where I take AP or I take

college-level courses.

It helps school morale. It helps. It makes me feel proud of my school and myself.

(Pause.)

(End of video.)

LEE JONES: AP may be for you. That is really what this forum is all about -- figuring out ways to provide opportunity for students who may not have had such opportunities, or in schools where such opportunities have not existed to date.

We want to be able to help students to think like this:

Maybe I will try that course, but I hear that it is really hard. Hey, I can do this. I can do this. I can be successful in this course. I can even take this exam, and I can do as well and maybe even better than other students in the country. I can do college-level work in high school. Therefore, I can be successful in college.

I think that is really what Advanced Placement and other challenging academic courses do for students in high schools.

It gets them ready and confident to be successful in college, and that is really what we are trying to do for as many students and as many schools as we can.

But, we are not providing as many students with that opportunity as we would like to, and it doesn't happen overnight.

As many of you in this room know better than I do, it takes a lot of work. A school needs to have qualified, prepared teachers and a commitment to ongoing teacher professional development.

It needs to have a curriculum that prepares students to be ready for challenging academic courses in high school that starts getting them prepared in middle school, and even earlier years.

You need to have instructional resources that are appropriate for the teaching of college-level courses in high school.

Preparing teachers, preparing students in the pre-AP years, and providing instructional resources are all three pieces of the puzzle to

providing access and opportunity to low-income students for AP and other challenging academic courses that we will be focusing on over much of the next two days.

There are a lot of folks here to work with the state teams.

I know that you won't be able to recognize and see everybody, but I am going to ask them that they at least put up their hands.

Department of Education staff that we have here will be through the conference all during these two days.

College Board regional office staff--and most of them are hiding out in the back--will be here to work with state teams from their regions.

Brad Richardson, the Regional Director for the U.S. for IB, is here to also talk with you about opportunities for including IB in the programs that you are preparing.

Before we go on to the next part of the program, I am going to take an opportunity to make an announcement, because, otherwise, I am afraid I will

forget.

We are going to try and--not try. We are going to start tomorrow morning a half an hour earlier than we had indicated.

The program says that we are going to start continental breakfast at 8:00 o'clock and then start the program at 9:00.

We are still going to have the continental breakfast at 8:00, but we are going to start the program in here at 8:30, where Terry Peterson, the counselor to Secretary Riley, and Gerry Tirozzi of the NASSP will be here to talk about some important aspects of the AP program.

This adjustment of the schedule is such that we can squeeze Secretary Riley in on a modified time frame.

He needs to speak with us a little bit earlier around the lunch hour than we have originally anticipated.

But, if you can spread the word to any folks who you know that aren't here for this opening session, we are going to try and start it at 8:30

tomorrow.

Next on the agenda to help us set the stage for this forum, we have a special speaker.

I would like to introduce someone who is going to introduce us to that speaker, and that is Judith Johnson.

She is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education in the Department.

She has been one of the folks who really spearheaded getting this conference off the ground, and I want to personally thank her and all the folks in the Department for doing that.

Prior to coming to the Department, she was at White Plains High School, where she spearheaded the establishment of AP courses over the objections of just about everybody who thought it couldn't be done.

She really opened up the Gifted and Talented programs in that school to a much more diverse population.

We are really lucky to have Judith at the Department where she can take work that she did at

White Plains and try and make it a reality nationwide.

I would like to introduce to you Judith Johnson.

(Applause.)

JUDITH JOHNSON: Thank you and good afternoon. It is wonderful to see all of you here, and I have the delightful opportunity of introducing to you our speaker for the afternoon.

But, I want to just reiterate a comment that Lee offered and build upon it a bit more.

He has suggested that, when you leave at the end of our time together on Saturday, you will leave with a host of new ideas.

But, we are also going to give you the application packet, so we expect you to leave here not only with new ideas but with the packet, that you are ready to go back, fill out, and return, so you can compete for the $15 million.

So, the application packet will formally be announced, actually on Monday, but you will walk away with your packets on Saturday.

This all really is the continuing effort to bring into this country and across every school building in this country the Standards Based Reform Movement, which began with a very simple premise.

That is, that all of our children can learn to high standards.

Those of us who were in on the beginnings of the Standards Movement had no idea how difficult it was going to be to get people to both accept that principle and then translate it into actual practice for students.

So, it seemed quite natural as we moved through elementary school, middle school, and high school that we begin to examine what does it mean to ensure that all students are learning to high standards.

More importantly, how do you prepare students for the challenging college-level courses that should be offered to them at the high school level.

Our speaker today has taken that challenge on as her own challenge. She is someone that I will

introduce to you but needs virtually no introduction to educators across this country.

She understands that the day that you fill out the application for the test is the last step in a long series of experiences that didn't begin at high school, but that really began in elementary and middle school.

But, if you are going to be successful on this exam, a number of things needed to have happened before the day of the test.

You needed well-trained teachers who understood what it meant to teach a challenging curriculum and the higher levels of critical thinking.

You needed access to courses that needed to be available in your school.

You need the opportunity to take the course without fear of whether or not you had the dollars or checks in your pocketbook to pay for the course.

You needed, certainly, to be assured that you were prepared all along the way, so, by the time

you arrived at high school--and this was the issue we faced in my former school district where I served as the Assistant Superintendent--and that was that you needed to be prepared to be successful.

It is one thing to have the courses offered.

It is another to be prepared to be successful.

So, when we first offered our first slate of awards, we focused solely on the test fees. We quickly recognized that, once you support the test fees, there's a lot more work to be done.

That is why we hope that you will walk out of here on Saturday with, both, an application packet and a wonderful set of ideas.

To inspire you, I want to introduce to you our guest speaker, who has some surprise announcements, by the way, about the video.

But, I will leave that to her. Dr. Lorraine Munroe, who is currently the Executive Director for the School Leadership Academy at the Center for Educational Innovation in New York, has a

rich, rich history in public education.

She is currently focused on the training of building administrators.

That is her current role, but let me just share with you some of the other important--very important--contributions she has made to public education.

She has been Principal of the Frederick Douglass Academy for College and Professional Careers in Public School District 5 in New York City.

She was there for five years and was featured on the magazine cover of New York Times Magazine.

I think at that time, she will also tell you, she was featured on 60 Minutes.

She has been an educational consultant across the country on Effective Strategies for Counseling Practices for Disadvantaged and Poor Children.

She has been the founder and Director of the Center for Minority Achievement at Bank Street College, where she worked for four years to get that

launched.

She has consulted across the country. She has memberships in a variety of institutions.

Her honors and awards include being featured in Reader's Digest in December of 1997, being featured in Ebony Magazine in 1996, being featured in 60 Minutes in 1996.

I remember sitting there saying I know her when I saw that 60 Minutes episode.

She is an educational leader who has been recognized by the New York City Administrative Women in Education.

She has been the Bronx Educator of the Year. That means she is a real New Yorker--the Bronx Educator of the Year.

(Laughter.)

JUDITH JOHNSON: She is a member and has been recognized by the Harlem Network for her outstanding achievements in education awards.

In addition to being the recipient of a five honorary doctorate degree, she has an earned degree from Teachers' College, and E.D.D. and an M.A.

and very rich undergraduate in graduate history.

It is my pleasure to introduce to you Dr. Lorraine Munroe, who understands that access to successful work at the AP level begins way before you sign up for the course.

The degree to which we prepare our students well really has influence on the success they experience once they are in that course.

So, Dr. Lorraine Munroe.

(Applause.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: Good afternoon, and I am really pleased to be here. Thank you so much for inviting me.

The surprise is that the first African-American student that you saw in the last one that you saw, named Zinga Mack, was a student of mine at the Frederick Douglass Academy in the seventh, eighth, and ninth grades.

When they moved, she moved to another school, but I take credit for launching her.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: This is quite something

to be here with you, because yesterday I was in another ballroom with 100 children.

So, I am still on a high from that, because what we decided to do in my organization, the School Leadership Academy, which is set to train principals to be fierce and crazy and effective, we decided that we needed to train children to be fierce and effective and crazy for themselves and, last year, began conferences such as this for students.

So, yesterday, we had 100 kids with their teachers in a ballroom at the Marriott in Brooklyn and just said to them: You are leaders.

What was so wonderful is that they believed it and exhibited all the qualities that people would not think you would see from children from grades 1 to 12.

It is interesting, because I didn't think we should have--this is our second year in doing this.

I didn't think we should have children in the first grade come to a leadership conference, because I figured they're in the first grade. What

do you want from kids in the first grade?

So, my colleague, who is wonderful, said: Well, maybe we should start with the fifth grade.

Then, I thought, because the best teacher-- The best teacher of exemplary practice is always memory.

You know, who did it well for you? What did that person do?

I recall that Mr. Cooper in the third grade started me to be the leader that I am today, to be able to stand before you and speak.

In the third grade, I learned that, and so I said to the teachers: Let's start in the fourth grade.

One teacher, who has 2000 children in elementary school, said: I've got some smart, smart first-graders.

Last year, they came in. We sent letters to the parents saying: You have this remarkable-- See, if you want to get kids to be in these AP courses, you have to start making parents think that they are remarkable and make them remarkable at home.

So, one little boy showed up in a tux.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: I think he was eight. He had a tux and little tie. I said to him: You're going to get married after this? What is this outfit?

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: What had happened with those children is that we designated them as leaders.

We said: You're a leader. And they behaved that way. The hotel staff could not believe that these children were focused on leadership issues, that a little kid could get up and say: I think a leader should be honest, should know what to do, should have integrity. And just went on.

I said: How old is he? How old is he? And, so, what you assume from children, you get.

What you call them, you get, so we assumed that they were smarter leaders, and they gave us that back.

They had the right stuff. We said that. So, I gave you that as a prelude to what I believe.

I am going to talk about it.

It is interesting. The gentleman, Mr. Jones, said to me: How long is your talk? I said: How long have the other people spoken? He says there have been no other people.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: I said: So, how long do you expect the other ones to speak? He said: What about ten minutes?

I said: I came here from New York for ten minutes. No, no way.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: So sit back.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: No, the truth is I told him maybe 20 - 25 minutes just to indicate to you some of the things that I have done and what I believe about this Advanced Placement business.

I really think that, those of us in this room, we are all believers, and we are here because we believe and we act as if we believe that the

intellectual capacity of children is not tied to race, color, ethnicity, economic level, family configuration, or handicapping conditions.

We believe that. We believe that positive human intervention is a potential to transform children's hearts and mind and change their cognitive development, and give them hope and promise.

Long before you get to the Zinga Macks and the children who were there, all of this has to be in place.

So, part of what I want to talk about as being radical to start AP in kindergarten, AP in pre-K.

That is where the challenge begins. That is where children start to get smart. Can't wait until middle school. Can't wait until middle school.

They have to have AP straight along. That is-- I used to call it the plus-one. You ask kids to do five spelling words, and the next time it is six.

The next time it's seven, and the next time it's eight, because they respond to the teacher

who puts it there and just keeps escalating.

So, you can't wait that long. I will tell a personal story about how smart kids get very early on and how, in poor schools, we ask nothing of little kids.

We give them crayons. We give them pie plates. I have outlawed pie plates. You know, those paper pie plates where--

It's a turkey sometimes. It's a bunny sometimes. It's a Santa Clause sometimes.

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: What is it when children are natural artists? See, the AP starts in the minds of the teachers who have their hands and minds on these children.

So, I am going to tell you this little part, because it just jump-starts me.

I taught middle school and high school for more years than I will care to admit, and when I was a parent of two children you know you are so busy being a parent, you can't step back but now I have

three grandchildren so I can kind of step back.

I have a grandson named Max, and my daughter said: I named him Max, because he will be maximum everything. Max was in a pre-pre kindergarten class.

He came home, and his mother said to him: How was school today? He said: Fine. She said: What did you do? Because this is tradition in my family.

My mother asked me until I was 25 how was school today, so I asked my children how it was, so Terry asked Max: How is school today?

He said: It was wonderful. We had a guest speaker.

You see what I mean by Advanced Placement? How many elementary schools in the places where you come from have guest speakers for children who are four or five?

So, she says: A guest speaker? What did he talk about, Max?

He said: He talked about an artist. His name was Monet.

She said: Really?

He said: Yeah, well, see, Monet is dead, so he couldn't come, so this man had to come.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: So, she said: Is there anything else? He said--Max said: Yeah, you know, those water lilies are pretty cool.

I tell this, because I say you can't, you can't dummy it down. You can't, because Max's brain is going like that, and most kids' brains are going like that.

We just say come and play, get the crayons. Now we have recess. Now we have nap time. Now we have playtime.

What happened the entire morning is gone, and there's been no cognitive development in more schools across this country than you would want to believe, and particularly those in poor neighborhoods where parents don't come and say: What's going on here?

So, if you want to expand the opportunities for children to get into AP, you have

to expand what is happening to children once they come in the school door.

That is four-, five-, and six years old. By the time they are in the fourth grade, if they haven't caught the love of learning the way these children obviously had--

If they cannot read by the time they are nine or ten, do you know how many boys in this country--black, brown, red, yellow, poor--can't read when they are in the fourth grade. They are walking toward prison.

Never mind AP courses. You have expanded nothing. You have expanded nothing.

I hope you didn't think I was going to come up here and be nice. I am being nice, because that's why you are here--because you are as crazy as I am to say what is going on the schools in my district and how can we expand the opportunities for these kids.

So, part of it is, since you can't predict who is going to benefit from all these AP courses and accelerated and challenging things, then everybody's

got to be challenged--everybody.

So, when you go home with the plans, you say which kids are we saying definitely-- Zinga Mack, the girl there, comes from a family--

Her father is a lawyer. The mother is a teacher, librarian, now an Assistant Principal. All her brothers and sisters have gone to law school and medical school.

That's not the kind of kid we are talking about, because, if she hadn't come to the Academy, she would have excelled because her parents were at home saying excel.

We are talking about the kids who don't have that kind of parenting, who have great brains, but who are not challenged.

If you don't give the experiences and exposures, you cannot expand the horizons and you can't make the kids come here.

Peter J. says you want to increase children's IQ, you increase their experiences and exposures.

So, I will tell you in a few minutes how

we did that at the Academy.

The next thing all of us in here believe is that cognitive ability is increased by notching up--notching it up.

You know, that cook. The cook on the television talks about notching it up. I say-- You don't watch television. I watch all the cooking.

The guy says notch it up; put more seasoning in. With children, we notch it up. We raise the expectations and provide the instruction and tutorial.

We say you want to get more kids into AP courses, you have to make sure that, wherever you are, these kids are getting tutorial.

In my school, it was mandatory. If you were not going to pass the state exams, if we figured you weren't going to get through, you did not go home. You stayed.

I sent a letter home to the parents saying: You will not see your child on sunlight--

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: --until he or she has

mastered this skill. Do you know that, because the kids mastered them, we never had to make it mandatory anymore.

Children said: When is that going to start? When is that going to start?

So, you have to be crazy. There's a recognition by all of us in this room that school has the power to interrupt and counter external negative environment, because school is the environment that they all have to come to.

All have to come. They don't have to go to church. Don't have to go to synagogue, mosque, but they got to come to school.

It's a golden opportunity. It's a golden opportunity that, no matter what was happening in their lives, you want them here.

You make the school environment something incredible, if that is in your power, and some people in this audience have that.

I will tell one story about a girl who is now finishing her third year at one of the Ivy League schools, who came to the Academy--a very bright kid.

Of course, she took the AP courses that we offered at the Academy, but we also, at the Academy, expanded because we got famous through the New York Times and all the media.

We were able to send children to places like Israel and France and England, and this kid was able to go to one of the foreign countries.

I said: We just need parents' signatures so that you can go. We can get the passport.

She said: I guess I'm not going. I said: Why? She says: Both my parents are in prison, and I don't know where they are.

But this kid was at the top, at the top of class because the school environment says you are smart. Come over here. I am not responsible for your mama. I'm not responsible for your papa. I'm not responsible for where you are, that you are on welfare. I'm not responsible for that. I'm responsible for getting you out of here.

So, she did go to Israel. She did come back. She was physically abused by the person who said: How dare you go to Israel?

So, we hid her.

Do you remember Harriet Tubman with the Underground Railroad. I hid this kid.

People would come and say: Where is she?

I'd say: I don't know. Don't worry. I'm just the Principal. How am I supposed to know where she is?

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: She took all the AP courses, aced the SATs, and is finishing her third year at one of the great schools on the Eastern Seaboard--an Ivy League.

The recognition that school is the anchor for lots and lots of kids who are unmoored in every other part of their lives, the recognition that multiple interactions early on, early on, makes a difference in the increased academic achievement of children, makes a difference in the numbers of children who are poor and black and brown who come to those AP courses.

If you are thinking about increasing the number of those children, you have to go further down

than you think.

You say high school? It is not high school.

You say middle school? It is not middle school, because everyone of us in here knew we were smart by the third, fourth, and fifth grades.

If you just went back in memory, when did you learn to read? When did you like school? When did you catch onto something?

It was in elementary school.

Sometimes, middle school.

By the time it's high school, the kids have developed a carapace, it's real hard to crack it.

I was very good at cracking it, because I am 17-1/2 anyway.

You've got to remain a kid if you're going to help kids.

So that sense of where are you going to train the cannon, and I don't say remove it from high school. I am saying take a look at what's happening in middle school.

Take a look at what happens before the fourth grade.

I read something--or one of my teachers told me something that I will share with you, and it may be apocryphal, but I don't care.

He said he had seen an article in a newspaper, and he is going to get the article for me, but it said that the people who build prisons calculate how many to build and where to build them by the results of the fourth grade reading tests.

Now before I heard that I used to say to all audiences: A black boy, brown boy, poor boy, who can't read, can't decode by the time he is in the fourth grade is walking toward the local prison.

So you want some of these children to be rescued. I can't you all how to do it, but I am going to tell you a little bit now.

So how do we expand the numbers of these poor and minority children across this country, so that they have access to these challenging courses?

You have to give them more stuff. You heard what the kid who said: I just did more stuff.

You have to have teachers who believe in the children and have an attitude toward poor kids that that is a disadvantage over which you have no control.

But I do have control over what I put in your head, and I will demand more and more and more. Because very often children become disadvantaged by attending schools.

They are disadvantaged where little or nothing is expected of them. And so it begins with great teachers, great superintendents, great boards of education, who say: It doesn't matter where the school is, it matters what happens in that school, and I will place my best in there.

I will train my teachers to be the best, and I will harass the hell out of those who don't believe that the children can do and continually fail children year after year. People who you would not want your own children to be with.

This access begins with the teacher who

plans and assumes success for all the kids in front of them, not the ones they wish were in front of them.

When I became Principal of Taft High School in the Bronx, with 3200 children--children who were wonderful, who were ill-taught and nothing was expected of--I went in and said: You're smart.

I went in and said to my teachers: You will plan, and you will be magic for these children.

I had no idea what magic was. I didn't know what their magic was, but I released them when I said: You will plan, and you will plan for success.

We set high standards. We talked to the children about the high standards, because in so many schools it's a mystery.

Children said: I wonder why we are doing this?

The teacher says: I know. You'll find out one day. One day it will all be clear to you.

Great teachers say: Here is the lay of the land. This is what we are going to do. This is at the end of the road. This is why I am asking you

to do this.

And teach so that children will understand the reasons for the high expectations, what the reward is at the end of the road.

The most astounding thing that I found being a principal the first time is that children did not know how to study.

Children would fail thunderously. They didn't know how to study. And so in every school where I have had some influence, I said: The first thing you do in September is to teach these children how to ace the tests, how to read the questions, how to interpret the questions, how to get test language, and to incrementally teach them to be successful.

It begins, as I say, in pre-K and continues intensely through the fourth grade.

If I were going to be principal again, I would say give me a school, pre-K to four, and leave me alone.

It would take Godzilla to kill them, because every good thing--art, music, dance, literature, drama--would be put in, every kind of

field trip, so all these things, when you go back, you say: Are we doing this, because, if we don't do this early up, there is no point in wondering why poor kids are not coming there, why black kids are not coming there, why Latinos, new to the country, old to the country, are not coming there, why Native Americans are not coming there.

It is not a mystery, because that's the foundation, and middle school is the last chance along.

To say and talk about middle school as "ha, ha, ha," middle school is not a place to play. It is not an experimental ground.

It is preparation for the rest of their lives, built solidly on what was done pre-K to four.

So, where literacy has been taught, where literacy-- You know, what we do now is drop-- They have drop everything and read.

We now have in our program something called Drop Everything and Cram, because the exams say who gets it and who doesn't.

You can say whatever you want about exams.

You don't, because you are talking about the APs, but you have a lot of people who will say: These children. It's just so difficult for them with the kinds of lives that they have, and they can't possibly-- It's just that you're asking too much of this particular population. A long time ago, the school was wonderful before the demographics changed.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: We know what the demographic change meant. It meant that it is getter blacker and browner and poorer and poorer.

I have taught those kids nearly my whole life, and I have taught kids who are rich, and I have taught all kinds of people, and I always teach here.

So, all the things that I say when I go around the country is: You teach there and teach children how to reach their incremental.

I want to tell you about a program that I am now funding with money from the GAP Foundation.

We have a little school in Englewood, New Jersey. It is a pre-K to the first grade.

This principal is being funded to make

sure that every first-grader leaves there reading and has made a program called KIBAM--Kids' Books, Arts, and Music.

Let me tell you how deep--when you really get crazy people who put it in because music and art and dance children love, and how to get literacy in using those things.

She has an incredible art teacher and incredible music teacher, so, when you are thinking AP courses deep down, you've got to target and train people deep down early up that they have to know a subject and love a subject.

It is a funny thing in this country. You can teach elementary school and never majored in a subject.

You've got to major in a subject, okay. You've got to know a subject to have some passion about a thing.

So, here we go with these little kindergarten children, so I have to take the GAP people to see what I am doing with their money.

How much time I got, Jones? Five minutes.

Ten minutes.

LEE JONES: You've got as much as you want.

LORRAINE MUNROE: I was going to take it anyway. So, here is what happens. I've just got to get a plane. That's all my timetable is.

So, I took the funders to see this little kindergarten class where they are learning about art, because I had gone on a previous time.

Outside the room, it said: We paint like Picasso. There were these incredible masks that these kindergarten children had done.

So, I say to the funder: You want to see what these children do? So, we go. The teacher says: Oh, Dr. Munroe, I am so glad you are here and showing off.

She holds up something. She says to the children: Children, who is the painter of this piece of work?

The children say: Sara. She says: And how did he paint, children? They say: Dot, dot, dot, dot, dot, dot.

"And what do we call the method of painting, children?" They said: Pointalism.

I said: Okay. You know this is kindergarten. So, she says: Dr. Munroe, do you want to see the other thing they have done?

I said: Yes, what is it? She said: I went to the local hospital and got surgical caps for the children. They have their little art gowns, and I pasted paper underneath all of their desks, and they had to lie down and paint on their backs.

She said to the children: Children, who was this? How did we do this painting?

"We were lying on our backs."

"Do you know an artist who painted like that?"

"Yes, Michelangelo."

"Where did he paint?"

"In a chapel. That's where he painted. In the chapel."

I said: And what was the name of the chapel? "The Sistine Chapel."

That's pre-K. That is the KIBAM that is

funded. Is there any doubt that they will be reading and be unbelievable and ready--and all those children.

Here is the other thing that rides in our country. This little school sits in the middle of millionaire homes--I would say 100 percent inhabited by white people, and there are no white children in that school.

They are all African-Americans and Latinos. This is the kind of craziness that operates in terms of racism, which I have chosen to ignore in my life except when it exposes itself.

Then, I turn into something you don't want to know.

But, the point is that literacy can start early, early, early. It is being proven in this little school -- increased experiences and exposures.

They go to museums. They're ready-- They're getting ready for your AP challenge--these children.

We found success in the fourth grades-- third and fourth grades. Prison prevention. I

notice there were two rooms down the hall where they had two rooms of people talking about the Glenville Prison, wherever that is.

So, who gets the good teacher? It's usually the children who have already exhibited the ability.

In a really great school, all the children get the great teacher, who not only loves the subject but loves kids and knows child development.

You don't know child development, you can assign a lot of kids to Special Ed. I go to schools. I say: Show me Special Ed is down here. It's over here. Who's in there? Black and brown boys, and they're not Special Ed.

The teacher has forgotten what it is like to be a boy. Boys are certifiable.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: Boys cannot sit still. Some men in here have shifted several times during my talk.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: If you don't know what

normal is, everything is abnormal, and boys are there.

Yet, in one of our schools, when you talk about notching it up and expecting-- In one of my schools, the Special Ed children--which we call Special Progress in my program--published a school newspaper.

So, we are getting them ready to get out of there. It's not the roach motel. You don't check in and don't check out.

You are checking out of there. In another one of my schools, those children, because the teacher has a passion for iguanas, they have a roomful of iguanas and huge boa constrictors.

I don't want to go in--

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: --but I went in. They were all over the room in cages. I saw one that has this huge boa constrictor.

There was this rat running around in the cage. I said to the teacher: What's the rat in there for?

He says: That's supper. I thought this teacher is so passionate, because the boys--it is mostly boys--they run computers. They breed fish. They have been called by a television studio to do stuff.

They have been called by a toy company--those people who do the Nintendos--to come and test a kind of video stuff.

You walk in there, you don't know that, so I walked in. I said: This is wonderful that the teacher has this kind of plastic model of a huge iguana sitting right on top of the radiator like that.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: It was alive. The custodians don't clean that room.

(Laughter.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: In fact, one came in and ran out, and the teacher came the next day, and the iguana was walking down the middle of the hall kind of waiting for him.

But, the sense of expectations-- There's

a teacher with a passion who says: I teach my passion.

Through that passion, these boys learn to read, write. They write stories. They write dramas. They have art all over the place.

They are going to be ready for AP courses, and that is not likely in most places.

The second step is to think that everybody is smart. Everybody is smarter than you think they are.

All kids like competition, and really great schools find the one thing that a kid can love and save the kid through that thing.

Ultimately-- Let me just close by telling you the Frederick Douglass story very briefly, because what we did was to take children from central Harlem who are mostly below the 50th percentile in reading, and trained them so that, by graduation time, 96, 98 percent of them went on to college.

We just said: You're smart. We kept saying: You're smart. We kept putting those things in place that made them smart, so that, when they

graduated, they had taken calculus.

They had taken physics. We offered French, Spanish, Japanese, and Latin. Seniors who had finished language requirements volunteered to take Latin.

We had fencing. We had hockey. We had tennis. I wanted them so polished that AP course was-- What is that? That's what we always do.

I wanted them so smooth that, when they went off to Dartmouth and Columbia and Fisk and Morehouse and Spelman, Colgate and Hobart, and all those places that they went, that they would feel that they belonged.

These kids belonged. They said: We've been doing this. But, we started the school in the seventh grade, and in the seventh and eighth grade, gave them everything they were missing.

We did not say: I am appalled at the level at which these children can add a problem, and they don't know anything. I'm just appalled.

Because that is what happens in most schools. "They don't know their multiplication. My

God, the decimals are a mystery to them, and they can't write a good declarative sentence."

See, it's like going to the dentist, and he says: You know you've got cavities, and you came to me?

(Laughter.)

(Applause.)

LORRAINE MUNROE: Isn't that why they came to school? Isn't that why their parents sent them to school?

So, in my present program-- By the way, it is still, at the last graduating class from FDA--Frederick Douglass Academy--100 percent went on to college and all the great schools in this country and in the community.

What we are about--and I am just going to finish with this--I wish I could stay a long time and just chat around with you--my daughter is Associate Director of a public health program at B.U.

We were talking last night, and she said: I have to give a seminar, mom, something called Threats to Validity.

I said: Well, what is that about? So, she explains the threats to validity in terms of research.

I thought I would close with just helping you to think about that, that if you don't start AP preparation earlier than you think, we are cultivating threats to the validity of the lives of these children, that they will not--

It will continue to be the isolated one or two Latinos, one or two African-Americans, one or two--some brown Asians--it will continue to be that.

I think that is unacceptable. I think it is totally unacceptable.

I am going to finish with a quote from my book Nothing Is Impossible. It says my personal life indicates that, if you go to a great school where people don't accept excuses--where people teach you, teach you not who your folks are, teach you not what your complexion is, teach you, not how much education your parents had, teach you not where you live--good things can happen.

The good things that you are about in this

room is expanding the opportunities for children, who are not presently taking these AP courses to be eligible. To be eligible to take them.

So I am continuing my work, as I am hoping those of you in this audience will continue to work in education.

I continue because I love it, and I know it, and I know its capacity to change children's live positively forever.

I feel the same way the Berrigan Brothers feel, and felt, when they kept being arrested for protesting against nuclear war and armament. They say: You know you're going to be arrested. Why do you continue to do this?

They said: We could not not do this.

That is your challenge.

You cannot not not do this and drive it down beyond anything and lower than you thought and make this inclusive for the 21st century for all children.

Thank you a lot.

(Applause and standing ovation.)

LEE JONES: Lorraine, you can have my 10, or 20, or 30, or 40 minutes at the podium anything that you would like.

To close out our agenda for this afternoon, we have two more, I think, special treats here, because we are going to hear from a couple of students--former AP students--later in their careers.

So, we can hear some reflections on what AP has meant to them.

When we are talking about expanding opportunities, we are really not just talking about expanding opportunities because we are interested in saying: Hey, that kid was in an AP course. Or: That kid went to college.

We think that we are establishing a record of success and the ability to take on challenge throughout people's lives.

You heard that one teacher in the video clip say: They're learning things that they're going to carry with them forever.

I am proud to say that we have two examples of students who we really do think have

benefited and can talk to you about how they have benefited from AP, that is carrying on for them even now.

First, I am going to introduce to you Jeff Livingston. Jeff is from South Carolina, went to high school in Carolina. It is Spring Valley High School.

He graduated in 1989. He took nine AP courses and examinations. He was able to enter Harvard as a sophomore.

After his graduation from Harvard, he spent four and a half years at Merrill Lynch as an investment banker.

He has now started up his own Internet education company, Achieva, which specializes in college prep, test prep, and he hints to me they may even think about doing AP online courses.

So, one of the things that I said to him was: You know, I know this program has been successful when we generated our next generation of competition.

(Laughter.)

LEE JONES: So I want to welcome Jeff to the stage and let him talk to you.

(Applause.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: Let me say first that I am here today, because people like Dr. Munroe believed in me long ago, such that I would have access to those opportunities.

It was worth traveling across the country just to be here to see your passion and to know the good things that are happening as a result of you.

(Applause.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: I am that curious breed of American known today as the Dot-Com entrepreneur.

Between my home in Palo Alto and my office in San Jose is a region which we call Silicon Valley, about which some of you may have heard.

Some of you have heard that, in Silicon Valley, people who five or ten years ago were sweating about AP, BC Calculus, or AP Biology or AP U.S. History are changing business, are changing politics, even changing education.

You have heard, some of you, rumors that

we geeky AP scholars of yesteryear are plucking fortunes and fame from the palm trees of Silicon Valley.

I have come here today to let you know for sure that every word of it is true.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: In truth, I am here in acknowledgement of a debt. I am here acknowledging the debt that I owe to all of the people like you, some of whom I have known and touched--like Donna Darby, who is here from South Carolina--some of you I never met but whose efforts have impacted my life.

I am here acknowledging that debt. I am here speaking for those who could not be here to speak for themselves, to say quite simply thank you.

You efforts pay off. We appreciate it even if we don't acknowledge it as often as we might.

Now, I need to tell you a quick story in order to set the stage here just a little bit, and I need to take you back to Spring Valley High School in the Spring of 1989.

I remember this day well, because, just

like the several days before it, I went home at lunch to check the mailbox.

I remember the trip very well. I went out and got into my car. I loved my car. I had the world's most amazing car. I called this car my baby -- 1973 Volvo 240, turquoise, black almost-leather seats.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: My AP English teacher called it Jeff's Hoopty, but that's all right. I loved this car.

So, I went and got into my car, and it was a good day, I remember, because the radio was working.

I drove home, and my house is not especially close to my high school, but, when I finally got to where you turn around the bend and you could see the mailbox, I started screaming and I started shouting, so much so that I had to get out of the car and run the rest of the dusty road towards the mailbox.

When I got there, no one was home except

my brother's dog, so I grabbed this collie, and I am jumping up and down in the dirt by the mailbox shouting for all I am worth: Why am I so happy?

Because there is a fat envelope sticking out of the mailbox. It was huge. It had to be folded over and shoved in.

I knew enough then--and my students in California know enough now--to know that rejection letters tend to come in small envelopes.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: It does not take a lot of space to say: Yeah, right.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: But it does take a lot of space to say: Congratulations, you got in. Please come visit us. Here's some money. Look at how many good-looking black women we got in one photograph.

That takes lots of space. I do what I do today, and I am here today because I believe that every student can share that same joy that I had on that day.

I believe that every single person who ever sets out on this journey in public schools can get to that place.

If I didn't, Lord knows there are lots of other things I could be doing with my life.

I also know that I didn't get to that moment on my own, that that story started long, long before.

Let me tell you about the story of a fifth-grader in 1982 who was at the top of the waiting list of an underfunded Gifted and Talented program, who found out that the state of South Carolina had stumbled upon the wisdom to amend its constitution to reelect for the first time ever a governor to a second term.

When Governor Richard W. Riley was elected to that second term, his initiatives at funding educational programs for all students of all abilities allowed me to get off the waiting list the very next year, and allowed me to take advantage of programs all the way up through and including the nine AP courses that I took.

Make no mistake. I couldn't have afforded to pay for one of them.

Governor Riley, in his largess and his wisdom and his long vision, arranged for the state of South Carolina to pay for all of them.

So, I am here in part to acknowledge a debt to a person who has been allowed to share his unique vision and his unique talents with the nation.

I am proud to be here as a representative of a generation too often thought cynical, to say that I know that it does matter who is elected.

I know that lives really are changed by the political process, and I really know that there are still good people involved in the public life that affects each of our lives.

(Applause.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: Now, I could tell you a lot about my experience in the AP program at Spring Valley High School.

I could tell you how I came to love Faulkner, not because I shared so much with middle-aged white men from Mississippi, but because my AP

English teacher had the passion that Dr. Munroe taught about.

I could tell you about an AP Latin teacher who frustrated her star pupil when she assigned something called declinsions.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: She also insisted that we learn and that we write out the definitions of English words that were derived from Latin words.

Now I said to her in the cocky way that 17-year-olds have: You know, I have never missed a single question on any of your tests that you give on the subject. Why do I need to go through that process of doing that when you know that you could give me all of the rest of the ones for the rest of the year and I would make an A on every single test?

She looked at me, and she said: Because you must learn, my friend, that there are things that you don't want to do that you will do anyway, and, if you don't do this, I will fail your Ivy League brown haughty behind.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: I could tell you about discussions in AP History about the framing of the constitution that inform my own private reading to this day.

But, I think the most important thing that I could talk to you about today is to remind those of you who know me, and to tell those of you who don't, that it was an accident.

It was not designed to be that way before me. You see, I grew up on the wrong side of a high fence separating my black working-class neighborhood from one of the most exclusive subdivisions in the state of South Carolina.

By a mistake of geography--or my mother would say a blessing from God--I got to go to their school.

My little brothers and I always joked that our dog lived in a different school district, because the line quite literally went through our back yard.

Now, the tragedy of the matter is the people who lived on the next street over--the people who were born into exactly the same circumstances as

I, born with exactly the same aptitude as I who were not challenged in the way that I was, who were not able to pursue the things that I had been able to pursue.

I am here as much as a representative of them as I am of a representative of those lucky few of us who have been able to take advantage of the AP program.

You know, the accident of my presence here is deeper than that, because I will challenge those of you who have not done so to find an African-American male, of my complexion and socioeconomic backg ound, and ask if they can identify with the following very quick story.

I was in kindergarten, long legs, big bones already, hyperactive, as boys will be and immediately recommended for the slow learners' group in kindergarten, because I couldn't or didn't color within the lines.

Now, I remember my mother who took off work at her ridiculously low wages, came to school, and yelled at everybody.

She started with my teacher. She went to the department head. She yelled at the principal. She yelled at the janitor for letting them do that to me.

I can see her now going through the hallway looking for people to yell at with my Aunt Shirley going: Oh, Lord, Mytheria, stop, and with me going: Go, mama, get 'em.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: Now, in my freshman year at Harvard college, I sat at one of those tables--you all know these tables where everybody at the table is black--I sat at that table, in part, because, you know, I lived my whole life believing that that table was possible, and when I found it I wasn't going to give it up because it made some other people feel uncomfortable.

But, I sat at that table in my freshman year, and every single man at the table had precisely the same story.

Every single one of them. And, I challenge you to find that star African-American

student from your district or from your state and ask that question.

Then, ask yourselves what it is about this system that would make me exceptional, what it is about this system that would make my family have to work so hard and still get so lucky to give me any of the opportunities that I have been granted -- expanding Advanced Placement opportunities.

It is not just a policy prescription. It is not just an applause line in the State of the Union Address.

It is about real lives like mine, because, you see, I come from the kind of family that won't let me forget, you know, even when my company goes public next year won't let me forget who I am and where I have come from, won't let me decide when I see those young men, my complexion and my age, being led off in chains, that there wasn't anything particular to me or to them that made that circumstance happen, in many cases.

I can't help but say: There, but for the grace of God am I.

So, I often accept these invitations to be a success story as much as I think it is strange, you know--an inherent modesty.

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: I accept these, because I won't let you think of me as exceptional.

I won't let you think that it is just me. I won't let you forget about all the other possible Jeff Livingstons who graduated from your schools last year who never had the opportunity.

I won't let you not be urgent about this. I won't let you not be upset that you didn't get one more set of grant fundings so that one more student could do what I have been able to do.

I won't let you do it. I won't let you do what my AP History class did at one point, when I was called out to the office to do some student council busines-

I came back, and the class was having a discussion about how I was not really black--

(Laughter.)

JEFF LIVINGSTON: --about how, because,

you know, my subjects and verbs most often agreed, and because I had been in their classes for most of their lives, that I didn't really count as one of those people.

Mind you, I was the only African-American that any of them ever, ever spoke to, but I was not black.

I won't let you do it. I won't let you think of me as exceptional in that way.

There's another reason that I have come here today, which is to remind you all of what you sometimes forget, which is that there are people like me in your communities who want to help you do what you do.

There are people like me in your school districts, in your states, who will gl[illegible]ully get in the face of a superintendent of education who is causing trouble.

There are people like me in your communities who respect and acknowledge the hard work that you do, but you don't ask for our help nearly enough.

I am here representing those people, as well. Now, because I know how hard you work and I know how hard it is, trust me.

I know how hard you work to get those grants. I know how hard you work to find those teachers.

I was in Texas just last week, spoke to two high-school principals who knew that I was coming here, and said: Tell me what I need is teachers. If you gave me more teachers, I could have that many more kids in these classes.

I know that your work is hard, so I will tell you about an e-mail exchange that I had with one of my former students.

She sent me an e-mail saying: Oh, my God, Jeff, it's so hard. College is so tough. What am I going to do? How am I going to survive this?

My response to her was: Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit.

I knew that she had also taken AP Latin at her school in California, and I remembered a little bit of AP Latin from my school in South Carolina.

So, I called to her mind a scene from Virgil's Enid where Emeus is fleeing the burning ruins of Troy.

His father is strapped to his back. The household Gods are under one arm, and his young son is being dragged along with the other arm.

He pauses for a moment, looks back at the ruins, and says: Perhaps someday it will please us to remember even these things.

So, as you work so hard, as you suffer the defeats that inevitably come and celebrate the victories which, hopefully, will come more often, remember that there will be a day in the future when you will look back on this time and you will be pleased to remember even these things along the way of making opportunities for the life that I enjoy and the life that people like me deserve to enjoy possible.

Thank you so much for your time.

(Applause.)

LEE JONES: Thank you so much, Jeff. I'd like to introduce to you now Jordanna Grant.

Jordanna was a student at Adlai Stevenson High School.

We have some Adlai Stevenson people in the audience, right? Yes, I see some hands.

She was a national AP scholar in 1997 when she graduated. She is now at Harvard University studying psychology, and she plans to go on and get her Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

I would like to introduce to you Jordanna Grant.

(Applause.)

JORDANNA GRANT: Distinguished members of the Department of Education, and National College Board, and participants at this forum.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak about the Advance Placement program and its impact on my life.

I am so grateful to be able to relate to you what AP has done for me, because its effects have been far-reaching.

The education I received through this program continues to benefit me today. I am

currently an undergraduate of Harvard University.

I now have the perspective to be able to see, not only the advantages of taking AP courses while still in high school, but also where these courses have taken me in my current college career, and hopefully where they will take me in my future endeavors.

I would like to discuss the facts of the AP program as I see them, and actually want to use the acronym FACT, F-A-C-T, to describe the main points of the program -- F for financing and educational future; A for academic achievement; C for career bolstering and furthering; and T for the transition from high school to college.

In keeping with this structure, I would like to begin with something that is traditionally left for the end, the financial benefits of the AP program.

This is often the underbelly of talk about education--the practical side that threatens to burst the bubble of optimism and dreams associated with learning--because education is just so expensive.

While the advantages of Advanced Placement go far beyond its financial ones in importance and scope, I would like to address this point first to dispel a potential myth and to demonstrate AP's contribution to making higher education more easier to obtain.

On the surface, the AP program looks pretty pricey to high-school parents.

Each test is currently $76, and the total certainly adds up when the student wants to take multiple exams in several subjects.

I know this is what my mother and I thought as I took my exams year after year, yet we realize now that this was a nominal fee compared to the money we are now saving in financing my college education.

My AP scores enabled me to receive a full year's credit, and, because I am planning to graduate in three years, we are saving about $34,000 for that fourth year because of my AP credit.

Obviously, not every student will elect to use AP scores to satisfy a year's worth of classes,

yet the financial benefits reach these other students, as well.

If a student attends a college which charges by the course, mentioned in the previous video, AP credit can reduce the required course-load and, thus, lower total costs.

If a student would have had to take five or even six undergraduate years to complete university requirements, AP credit can enable him or her to graduate after the normal four-year period, allowing this student to save the money from these extra semesters or years.

With graduate school becoming more and more prevalent as higher education becomes more and more accessible and necessary, the reduction of undergraduate costs can pave the way to easing the financial burden of higher degrees and, thus, promote these deeper levels of learning and career training.

The A in my acronym, FACT, is for academics, the heart of the Advanced Placement program.

Academics can be broken down further into

atmosphere and achievement.

The atmosphere created in an AP classroom is unique in several ways--ways I think are common to all AP classrooms regardless of teacher or high school.

This uniqueness owes itself in large part to the actual AP test in May -- the combination of the academic year and study of the subject.

In an ordinary honors class, there is sometimes added peer pressure not to try as hard, not to study as much, which can lead to underachievement for fear of being dubbed unpopular.

By contrast, the AP test provides a common goal -- an external motivation which students can point to as the reason they are working hard or checking and rechecking their homework.

This puts students in the class on similar wavelengths, whether they are motivated by an innate desire to learn or they just want the college credit, because both groups will need to put in the requisite effort to do well on the test.

There can be no traditional nerds who are

working too hard when everyone benefits from working hard.

This was my experience, and I was grateful, both, that that was a concrete goal in sight and practical purpose to all of my studying, as well as an atmosphere of general striving to gain more knowledge and analytical skills for their own sake.

The atmosphere created in my AP classrooms thus cleared the way for true academic achievement.

Advanced Placement material is constructed such that there is a valuable overlap in skills and learning between subjects.

For example, even in English, we had to be able to correctly identify our literary technique with a concrete term.

Even in Math, we needed to be able to verbally express and explain quantitative concepts.

In AP Government, my understanding of polling voters was facilitated by learning how polls work in AP Statistics.

Studying British colonization in AP

European History helped me to better contextualize the black South African struggle for rights depicted in Allen Peyton's Cry of the Beloved Country, which I read in AP English Literature.

Not only was I able to integrate many subjects into each other and gain cohesive knowledge in this way, I was able to retain and refine this knowledge through constant use in other AP classes and across my high-school years.

Furthermore, this ability to integrate material has certainly served me well so far in college.

I have been able to translate skills from one class to another, applying what I have learned across subjects because of my familiarity with doing so.

For example, last year I actively applied techniques learned in my Expository Writing class, in which we analyzed works of art, music, and literature, to essays in my psychology tutorial in which we were analyzing research journal articles.

This year, the skills from familiarity

with learning methods was especially helpful on my final in the History of Psychiatry, which required two analyses of source excerpts.

I remember it clearly. Just a few weeks ago, during the final, how my nerves were abated when I thought back to the DBQ's, or Document-Based Questions, that I had spent months preparing for in AP U.S. History in high school.

I had done this before. For me, AP didn't only stand for Advanced Placement, it stood for Always Preparing and Always Pushing, as I gained knowledge and learned how to learn, which continues to make college academics more comfortable and enjoyable.

Not only was I better prepared for the nature of college work.

The C in my acronym, FACT, stands for career, which I would like to address next.

Advanced Placement classes, in being geared towards college credit, promote forward thinking and future planning.

While no one expects all high-school

students to decide in high school the specific direction of their lives, thinking about potential avenues or pursuit is both healthy and part of the maturation process, in my opinion.

There are two ways that AP promotes career advancement.

The first is mental. AP exposes the high-school student to subjects that are more in-depth, more complicated, and more focused--and perhaps more representative of a certain subject as a whole.

Consequently, a higher level cat dissection in AP Biology can turn into a mini-look at what it would be like to dissect in a pre-med biology class.

Careful text analysis in AP English can provide a taste of what it is like to discuss literature with college-level attention to detail and style.

Because the classes are geared towards college preparation and higher-level thinking, they allow glimpses into different disciplines rather than surveys of everything, which lack deeper

investigation into the disciplines themselves.

This gives students a better idea of where their interests lie and perhaps what they should pursue further in their first year or two of actual university.

Most importantly, AP classes foster the idea that a student is going to college at all and keeps this goal at the front of his or her mind, while he or she explores different subjects and prepares for college matriculation.

The second way that AP promotes career advancement is not mental but practical.

Using credit, students can satisfy introductory requirements before even stepping foot on campus.

AP credit can waive the need for prerequisites in psychology, history, or chemistry--to name a few--which allows students to move right into smaller, more specialized classes that focus more closely on specific interests, topics, time periods, and scientific phenomena.

In bypassing these introductory courses,

students are given greater breadth in the classes they can choose to take, because they are not as hampered by required courses.

In addition, this provides greater leeway in choosing a major, because the faster a student can decide if an avenue is really appropriate for him, the faster he or she can change that major, if need be.

For me personally, my core requirements have been reduced from eight classes to five, which is definitely giving me greater room to choose classes, and ultimately graduate early.

With this reduced regulation of the classes I could take, I was able to more quickly explore my fields of interest and dive right into a challenging upper-level psychology course my first semester in college.

In all, the concept of career and the way of achieving one's career goals both become less nebulous and less intimidating, because the AP program helps to prepare the mind and the transcript for concrete consideration of what is out there.

Thus, Advanced Placement lives up to its name, not only in advancing the academic placement of students while in college, but in giving them a head start in thinking about finding a career and the means to follow it.

Lastly, the T in FACT stands for transition.

This, to me, is the most important part of what the Advanced Placement program provides, because it encompasses all that I have said and more.

I cannot tell you all adequately enough how much smoother and easier it has been for me to cross that bridge from high school to college, having taken AP classes.

AP was that bridge for me. Not only did my classes push me to reach my academic potential, not only did they expose me to possible career choices and deeper areas of study, or satisfy requirements in my college course load, I am convinced that AP helped me both get into Harvard and succeed at Harvard.

AP classes are laden with high

expectations from teachers and test graders, which I think can translate into a student's own higher expectations of him- or herself.

An essay on a college application is, therefore, not as daunting but another exercise in excellent writing that has been fostered by AP English and History.

An essay in a freshman year college writing class becomes a similar experience.

What is key here is familiarity-- familiarity with high expectations and with high-quality work, especially in writing which so many of the AP stress.

I felt I was more than prepared for college work, and I certainly felt I was accustomed to the volume of school work.

In fact, I think college, in some ways, is much easier in terms of workload than my APs were.

My transition was made easier by the fact that I had been raising the level of my work for years, rather than just getting by in high school.

I had had clear goals to work towards,

both immediate and long term -- the test in May and the future college credit I would receive.

These external motivations fueled the internal ones, such that I was excited about college-level learning and welcomed the challenge rather than being intimidated by something I had no idea about or because I hadn't any clue what to expect.

Now, in describing AP as a bridge, I am not equating high school and college, because the experiences are different for so many reasons.

What I am saying is that this bridge allows you to stroll across to the other side comfortably, rather than trying to battle the waves of fear and uncertainty as you struggle to swim across.

Another incredible opportunity that eased my transition from high school to college, and that I owe in large part to the freedom that AP credit afforded me, was being able to study abroad for nine months.

After I graduated high school, I left in late August for Israel to attend a religious girls'

school in Jerusalem until June.

I am Jewish and became Orthodox in high school and therefore had an intense desire to study my religion and heritage in the site of its greatest flowering and historical and emotional ties.

It was an incredible year in which I grew personally, and laid much of the foundation for my life as a Jewish woman.

While I was there, I didn't have to worry about secular credit at all.

I knew I would be receiving AP credit at Harvard, where I had deferred admission for one year.

This credit cushion allowed me to pursue my personal dream without the worry that I was losing time or that I would have to satisfy certain college requirements while in Israel.

Thus, it also became a year's refresher for me, which enabled me to enter Harvard invigorated and eager to delve into secular subjects again without the burnout that often follows a rigorous four years in high school.

While study abroad is a luxury, I firmly

believe that study abroad is possible for a wide range of people and tax brackets, because I went almost exclusively on scholarship money, as did many of my friends.

Advanced Placement credit facilitated the learning and experiences I gained in Israel by assuring me that the groundwork I had laid for my college career would be intact and waiting for me when I returned to take full advantage of it.

Those, in conclusion, are the facts of the impact of the Advanced Placement program on my life.

I am positive that the benefits I am now enjoying from having taken AP classes and the tests will continue throughout my college years in that formal academic setting.

It is very likely, as well, that I will still feel AP's effects in my professional life, as I further integrate learning skills that I gained and I am able to progress into graduate programs and jobs because of the head start that AP provided, which I think is leading to a more productive undergraduate experience.

I firmly believe that the academic challenge of Advanced Placement can be met by vast numbers of students independent of financial situation or social class.

This exposure to higher levels of learning, with its external and internal incentives, can not only advance a student in an actual college but can get that student into colleges he or she may never have considered, which can lead to economic advancement and create more potential for upward social mobility.

AP has contributed to my life so positively and strongly in both direct and indirect ways.

For me as an individual, AP stands for Avid Promoter, because I highly advocate this program, both from the perspective of a high-school student and a college undergraduate.

I truly hope that the same opportunities open to me will be made available to increasing numbers of students from all backgrounds in the future.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

LEE JONES: Thank you, Jordanna. Our goal for this kickoff session was inspiration, and I think all three of our speakers helped us achieve that.

Can we just give them, all three, one more round of applause?

(Applause.)

LEE JONES: The perspiration and hard work sessions start tomorrow, sprinkled in with some inspiration along the way, as well.

The next event on our agenda is a reception in this ballroom at 6:00 o'clock. We're running over.

I know that means that the hotel staff are going to have to work double time to get ready, so I am going to ask everybody to resist the temptation to hang out here and talk to each other, and to clear the room.

We will welcome you all back here again at 6:00 o'clock. Thanks very much.

(Whereupon, at 5:20 p.m., Thursday,

February 10, 2000, the meeting was adjourned, to reconvene at 8:30 a.m. the following day, Friday, February 11, 2000.)

Look-See Concordance Report

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UNIQUE WORDS: **2,234**
TOTAL OCCURRENCES: **5,736**
NOISE WORDS: **388**
TOTAL WORDS IN FILE: **16,254**

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SINGLE FILE CONCORDANCE

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CASE SENSITIVE

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INCLUDES ALL TEXT OCCURRENCES

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DATES **ON**

- - -

INCLUDES PURE NUMBERS

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POSSESSIVE FORMS **ON**

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